Ano Hi no Kimi wo Dakishimeta nara

Slice of Life Slice of Bliss

Volume 1 Chapter 6

ISBN 978-4-344-81372-4

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PUBLISHED BY GENTOSHA COMICS INC PRINTED IN JAPAN

あの日のきみを抱きしめたなら 1

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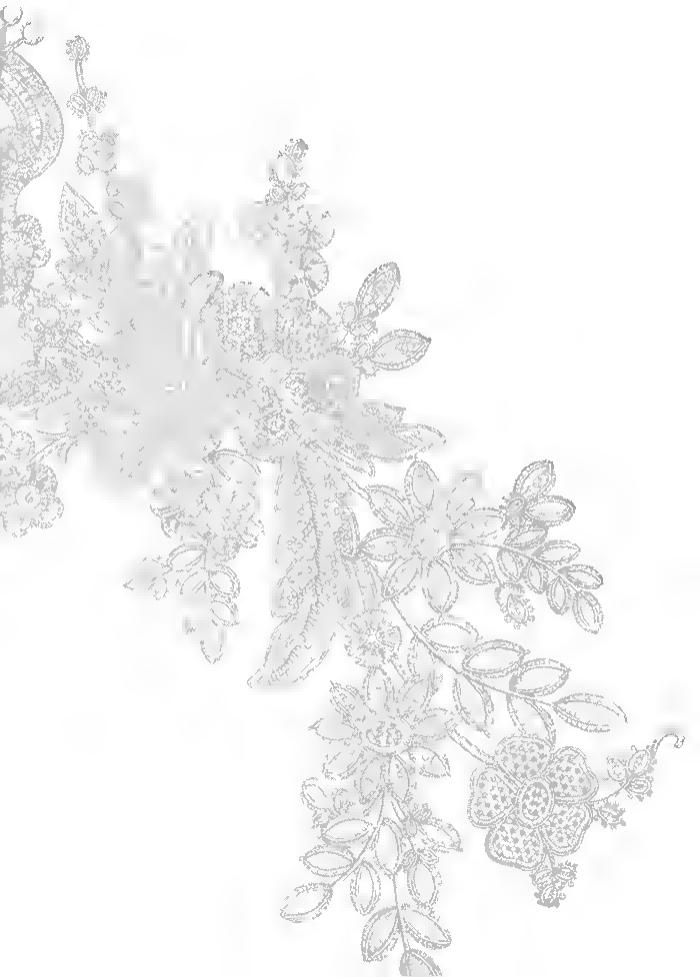
HIDE-TOSHI...
ding dong
clack
YOU...
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE...?

第1話



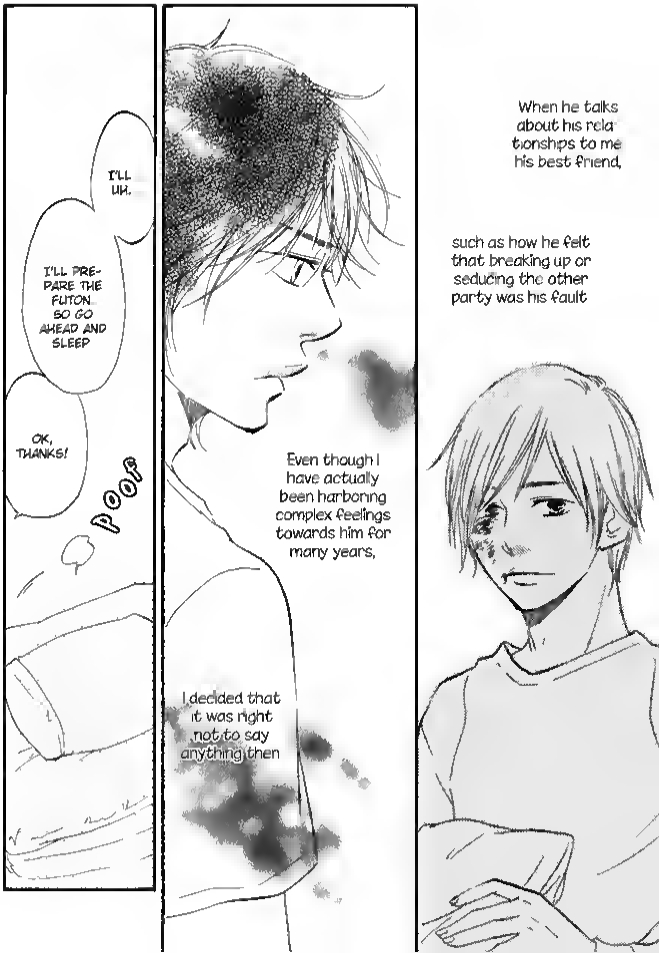
SORRY, KENGO
COULD YOU LET ME REST A LITTLE WHILE?
WAS IT KANA-ZAWA?
SHIT
NOT AGAIN!?
YEAH, BUT I THINK THIS'LL BE THE LAST TIME

Even his suit is a mess
So he didn't manage to get away
THANKS
ANYWAY, COOL OFF YOUR FACE
I'M SORRY, BUT CAN I STAY HERE TONIGHT?
I WANTED TO GO BACK BUT I MISSED THE LAST TRAIN TO MY PLACE
SURE DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A BATH?
NO, I'VE TAKEN A BATH ALREADY
THANK YOU... COULD YOU LEND ME SOMETHING TO WEAR, THOUGH?

I SEE...
THANKS
SORRY
COULD YOU LOOK THE OTHER WAY?
EH?
AH!
S-SORRY

Sawaki Hidetoshi, a childhood friend of mine, is gay
slip
After knowing him for so long, it just slips my mind sometimes.
NO, I'M SORRY AS WELL
THERE'S NO REASON TO APOLOGIZE, YOU FOOL!
I'M SORRY FOR BEING LIKE THIS.
IT'S JUST EMBARRASSING TO BE LOOKED AT.
DAMN IT THIS IS REALLY AWKWARD
At a time like this
When I'm forced to turn away and keep quiet

YES I'M REALLY SORRY TO HAVE MADE YOU WORRY SO MUCH
BUT I'VE ENDED IT THIS TIME... PROPERLY...
YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BEING THE LAST TIME RIGHT?
SO DID YOU BREAK UP WITH HIM?
So even after you've been beaten up for breaking up, you still had break up sex huh
clench
He never stands up for himself
I've known him quite well in my 26 years.
For instance..
Last time... there was a serious mix-up of the scheduling at his previous job
Although the mistake was made by a newbie who was careless enough to overlook the details, it was he who had to apologize and correct the problems later on...
For instance...

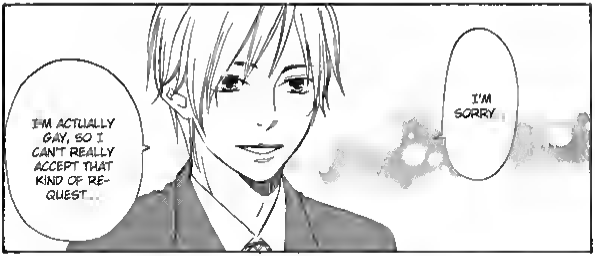

I'LL UH.
I'LL PREPARE THE FUTON. SO GO AHEAD AND SLEEP
OK, THANKS!
Poof
Even though I have actually been harboring complex feelings towards him for many years,
I decided that it was right not to say anything then
When he talks about his relationships to me his best friend,
such as how he felt that breaking up or seducing the other party was his fault

IF YOU AREN'T COMFORTABLE SLEEPING WITH THE LIGHTS ON, I CAN SWITCH TO JUST THE LAMP IF YOU WANT
SQUEAK
I STILL HAVE WORK TO DO
AREN'T YOU GOING TO SLEEP KENGO?
I DON'T MIND... THANKS... GOOD NIGHT...
ZZZ...
You're so stupid, really
HE MUST BE REALLY TIRED AFTER ALL.

If only you'd meet a man who'd treasure you more.
buzz
buzz
RRRR

WELL, YEAH KIND OF
KINDA HAVING A LITTLE PROBLEM WITH THE DOCUMENTS.
YOU LOOK SLEEPY, MUTSUURA
ha ha
Yawn
Sleeping next to Hidetoshi made me really self-conscious.
I couldn't get a wink of sleep
ha ha
GOOD JOB!
whisper
YOU REALLY HELPED ME BACK THEN
whisper
whisper
OH RIGHT REMEMBER THAT OTHER DAY?
OH, NO PROBLEM.
IS YOUR BROTHER DOING ALL RIGHT?

Hey, Mutsu-ura...
If I'm not mistaken, your childhood friend Sawaki-san, is a gay, right?
I'd like to get his opinion on something...
My colleague, Mio Yuuna has a brother who is dating another man.
KIND OF...
Because of that he needed a consult once
Hidetoshi is a fully-open gay
He doesn't hide his sexuality even in his workplace.
I introduced him to Mio the other day when we were out for coffee together and during the meeting...
SAWAKI-SAN... I THINK YOU'RE REALLY GREAT! WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED TO JOIN US THE NEXT TIME WE HAVE A GROUP DATE?
I THINK THE LADIES WOULD BE VERY THRILLED, FOR SURE!



After I accepted Mio's request...

I properly introduced Hidetoshi to her (again)

I SEE.
THE ADVICE ABOUT GETTING A STEADY JOB AND THE SUGGESTION ABOUT ADULT ADOPTION?
OH,
IT'S GOOD THAT THEY'RE GETTING ALONG WELL, RIGHT?
I GUESS SO
AND HE'S TAKEN SAWAKI-SAN'S SURPRISINGLY SOUND ADVICE TO HEART.
That advice is based on ...
Hide-toshi's lifestyle
Because no matter how much people disapprove as long as he has the necessary qualifications, his job as a designer won't be affected.

YOU KNOW, YOUR ACCEPTING ATTITUDE REALLY GOT ME THINKING.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
ALTHOUGH YOUR FRIEND IS GAY, YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL.
THAT WOULD CONFUSE ANYONE WHO'S PREJUDICED AGAINST GAYS, RIGHT?
I FEEL I CAN LEARN FROM YOU THERE.
.. Family and friends aren't the same! But she's certainly fair-minded.
I SAID, IS SAWAKI-SAN OKAY?
OKAY?
DIDN'T YOU SAY HIS BOYFRIEND'S AN ABUSIVE JERK?
THEY PROBABLY BROKE UP. I MEAN, AFTER I ASKED HIM TO...
AND HE GOT BEATEN UP FOR IT.
UNBELIEVABLE!
BUT AT LEAST THEY'RE FINALLY THROUGH.

YOU'RE NOT MY TYPE, BUT YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD LOOKING!
stare
KENGO WHY NOT JUST DATE HIM YOURSELF?
WHAT THE HELL? WHAT'S WITH THAT MEANINGFUL LOOK--?
Damn!
stare
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE!
WIMP!
SHUT UP!

I know
You don't have to tell me
If it were
Really that easy, it wouldn't be this painful
If I
Didn't care about Hidetoshi, I'd be able to end our friendship without a second thought
But if I want more than friendship it's more difficult...

The day he graduated from high school
Hidetoshi, older by two years, confessed to me shakily...
I'M... GAY.
KENGO, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT GAYS?
I still vividly recall that day...
I'M GOING TO UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO
WE PROBABLY WON'T SEE EACH OTHER AS OFTEN AS WE HAVE, SO I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING NOW

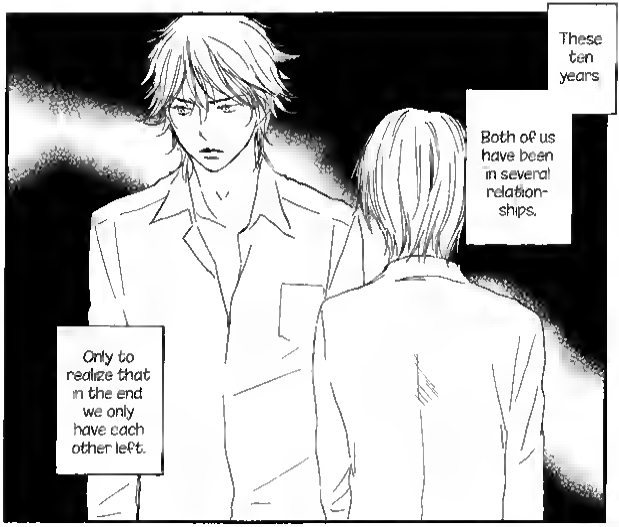
YOU'RE GAY?
WELL, SO WHAT, RIGHT? AFTER ALL, WE'RE JUST FRIENDS
Even now, I still think Hidetoshi was about to cry then.
He could hardly speak.
THAT WON'T EVER CHANGE RIGHT!?
JUST FRIENDS, HUH?
YOU'RE RIGHT...

That very minute,
I realized I had just made the biggest mistake
I didn't mean it that way!

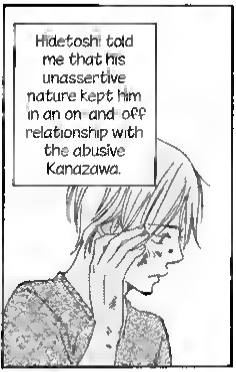
Hidetoshi was on the verge of confessing his love for me then
It dawned on me
But I'd dumped him before I even realized what I'd done.
Wait! I didn't mean it!
I...
Not knowing what to say, I simply kept quiet

WE'LL ALWAYS BE FRIENDS OKAY?
I
NOD
I couldn't do anything besides agree
I was too young to understand what love was
I didn't know how to comfort Hidetoshi
or why my own feelings were so confused.

I was the one who looked him up
He would have avoided me if I hadn't
I went to university in Tokyo too, and then got a job there
The only times we lost touch were when I studied in my hometown and those two short years when Hidetoshi was in Tokyo
And so ten years later,
we're still just friends.

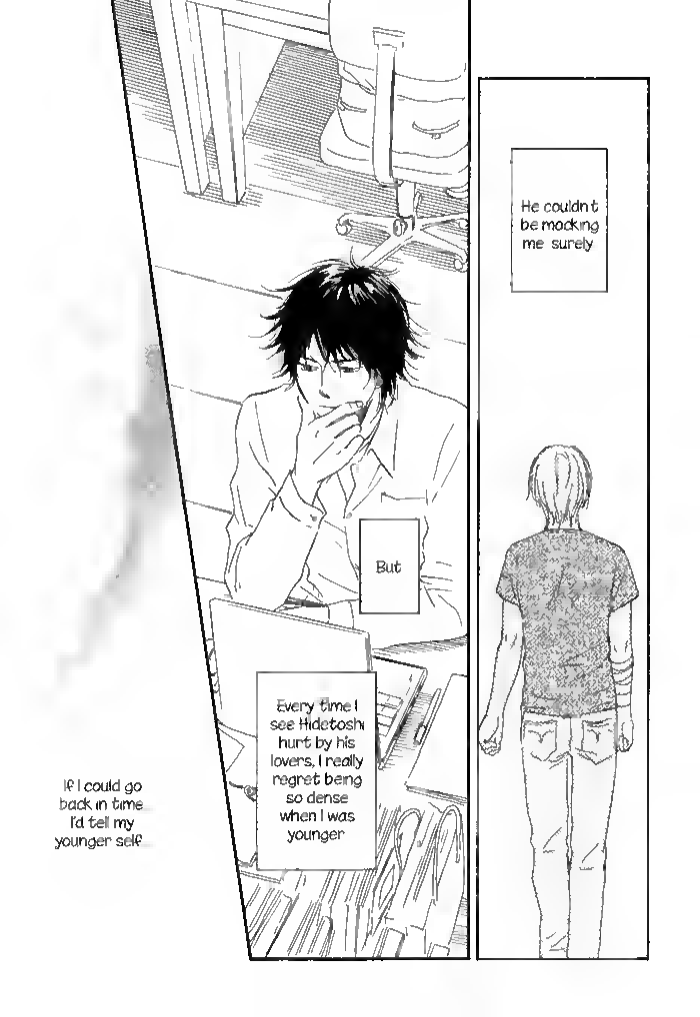

These ten years.
Both of us have been in several relation-ships.
Only to realize that in the end we only have each other left.

WHY DO YOU STAY WITH THAT JERK!?


Hidetoshi told me that his unassertive nature kept him in an on-and-off relationship with the abusive Kanazawa.

WELL, I'M ALREADY 28
THE OLDER I GET THE FEWER PARTNERS THERE ARE WHO WILL HOLD ME
IF I WERE A TACHI*, I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY SO MUCH
IF HE LEAVES ME, I'LL BE ALL ALONE
ONCE I THINK OF THAT, I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO END IT WITH HIM
*tachi = seme
Don't say such things and with that kind of expression!
As a "friend," I had no right to say anything.
Even so, I noticed...

WHAT IS FUNK?
WHAT IS FUNK?
Hidetoshi always went for men who were completely different from me
They only knew how to hurt him.
It was almost as if he were telling me that that anyone would do just so long as it wasn't me.


If I could go back in time I'd tell my younger self
Every time I see Hidetoshi hurt by his lovers, I really regret being so dense when I was younger
But
He couldn't be mocking me surely

will cause you pain each time you see him curled up resigned, beside you
Ten years from now the person you just dumped without realizing it
I want to tell my younger self "You're an idiot."

第2話
0001
SEA
COLOR

In the case of the magazine I write for, which is moderately popular
Editorial work,
can mean many things.
I have to be a one-man show
Ticket Box
Haa...
I HAVE TO VISIT HOT SPRINGS ON SUCH A HOT DAY
I feel there's no point in covering a place when it's already been discussed on the Net, or been covered by other magazines.
But I can't complain since it's work.
KiosK

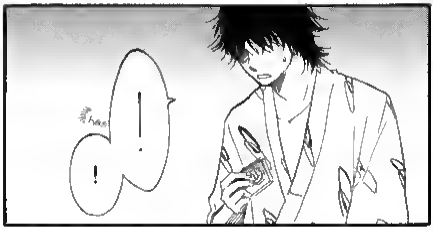
To get enough material I have to visit lots of places in a two- or three-night trip
OUR HOT SPRINGS COME RIGHT FROM THE SOURCE
SO THEY'RE VERY EFFECTIVE IN TREATING FATIGUE
Plash
Plash
Plash

I SEE...
IF I DIDN'T HAVE TO WORK, I'D LOVE TO RELAX IN ONE OF THEM
OH,
THEN DO YOU WANT TO SPEND THE NIGHT HERE INSTEAD?
AS MUCH AS I'D LOVE TO
I'M AFRAID I CAN'T AFFORD IT...
IT'S THE OFF-SEASON, SO PRICES ARE MUCH LOWER.
THANK YOU FOR THE RECOMMEN-DATIONS
I'VE LEARNED A LOT

HOW ABOUT I MAKE THE MEAL FREE?
!
Hm...
Worried...
IF I ADJUST THE TRAVEL EXPENSES A LITTLE, THAT OUGHT TO COVER IT
I was planning to stay at the business hotel in front of the bus station
But because of some last-minute work, I didn't make a reservation.
Smile
Smile
IN THAT CASE, COULD I TROUBLE YOU TO FEATURE OUR RESORT PROMINENTLY IN YOUR MAGAZINE ♡
I wasn't expecting this...
THEN I WON'T STAND ON CEREMONY

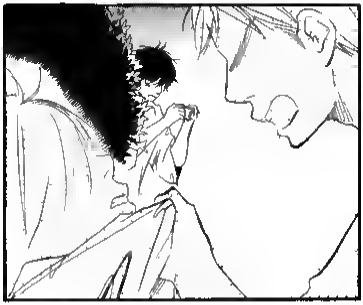
Apparently wild monkeys sometimes come to the springs.
That's part of the package
I brought my camera along in case I get something for the article.
露天風呂
*Sign = Outdoor Bath
The room's so comfortable
And it's the first time I've had a meal served in my room
THE MINI-BAR IS REALLY WELL STOCKED TOO
AH. THAT WAS DELICIOUS
There we go.
LET'S TRY TO TAKE A PICTURE IF WE CAN
HOW MUCH BATTERY LIFE IS LEFT?

WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
!!



That said,

It'd be troublesome if I got involved in something nasty



HEY!
ARE YOU OKAY?
F-FINE...
This guy's not very fit
I could beat him in a fight, if it comes to that
WHA...
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!?
YOU'D BETTER GIVE IT A REST!
I'VE GOT PROOF HERE THAT YOU'RE BEING VIOLENT.

HIDE-TOSHI?

Sfx: Stare
Are you that jerk Kang-zaWa?!

He's the one who beat Hidetoshi
black and blue!?
He looks so ordinary... I wouldn't have expected him to be the violent type
...This must be Kanazawa!
WHA...
WHAT...
HOW DO YOU KNOW...?
WHAT DO YOU WANT!?

WHY ARE YOU STILL WITH THIS JERK!?
HIDETOSHI! WHAT'S GOING ON?
I THOUGHT YOU BROKE UP WITH HIM!?
THE HELL HIDETOSHI? IS THIS YOUR "KENGO"?
WHO ARE YOU TO CALL ME BY THAT NAME!?
I

HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME ?
UNLESS YOU'RE GOING OUT?
THAT'S WHY YOU TOLD HIDETOSHI TO BREAK UP WITH ME
ISN'T THAT SO, HIDETOSHI?
I'VE TOLD YOU SO MANY TIMES KENGO ISN'T LIKE THAT

He's just my childhood playmate and friend.
There's nothing else between us
stab

UNLESS YOU WON'T ALLOW ME TO HAVE EVEN ONE FRIEND?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "RECORD"?
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
This is scary
He might get hit again if he keeps this up
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE YOU, WITH YOUR RECORD?
*Second street, the gay quarter of Tokyo
I KNOW EVERYTHING! AFTER WE BROKE UP YOU WENT STRAIGHT TO NI-CHOUME*!
Isn't that tone just asking for trouble?
WELL, WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SPYING ON ME!?
I.
YOU DON'T TRUST ME AT ALL?

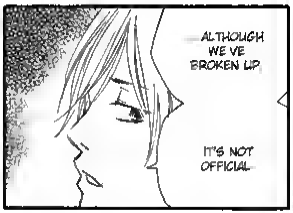
sfx: punch
!!
grab
SHUT UP, YOU SLUT!
HIEEE!
BLOOD
MY NOSE IS BLEEDING!
WILL YOU CUT IT OUT!?
It hurts
It hurts
Pull
BEING BEATEN HURTS, DOESN'T IT!?
THIS IS WHAT YOU'VE SEEN DOING TO HIDETOSHI!
NOW YOU KNOW HOW THAT FEELS!

HIDE-TOSHI!
WHY AM I GETTING BEATEN UP?
SLAMP
HEY... HELP ME OUT, OKAY?
KANA-ZAWA-SAN
'COS YOU SAID THIS WAS THE LAST TIME,
I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU NOT TO LEAVE ME ALL ALONE...
Hic
Hic
Hic
Hi de to shi!
Why?
Why haven't you guys broken up!?
Hurry up and break up with this jerk!
Hidetoshi!

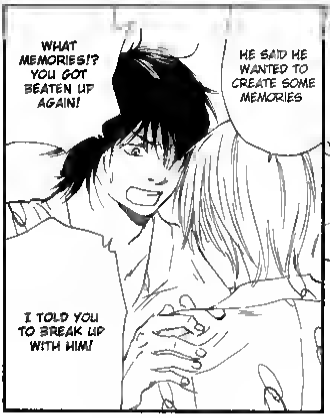
"JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU" MY ASS! THERE'S ALREADY PROOF OF ABUSE!
AH!
HEE!
KICK
LISTEN UP!
STAY AWAY FROM HIDETOSHI FROM NOW ON!
YOU'D BEST REMEMBER THAT IT HURTS WHEN YOU HIT SOMEONE!
YOU TOO!
GRAB
KENGO, HE'S...!
GIVE UP ON HIM... COME WITH ME!

It's infuriating!
Whether it's the worry Hidetoshi shows for Kanazawa
or the pathetic act Kanazawa puts on to get Hidetoshi's sympathy
These two keep dragging out their relationship
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
AT THIS HOT SPRING?

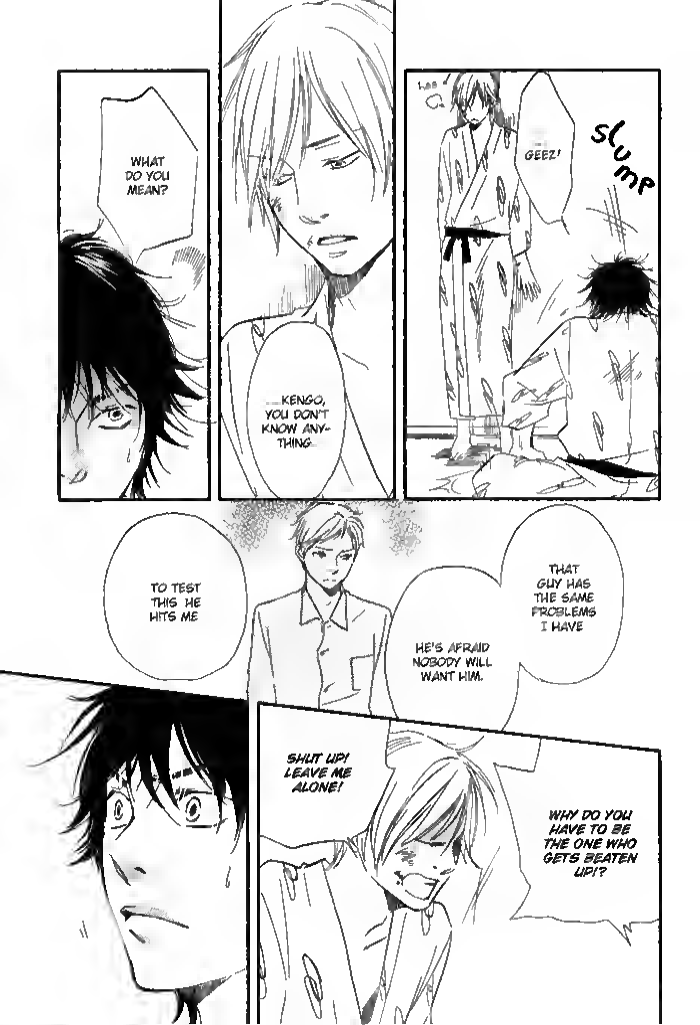
DIDN'T YOU ALREADY BREAK UP WITH KANAZAWA?
WHY ARE YOU STILL WITH THAT GUY AT A PLACE LIKE THIS?


ALTHOUGH WE'VE BROKEN UP
IT'S NOT OFFICIAL

I'M STAYING HERE FOR WORK... BUT THAT'S BESIDE THE POINT!
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING!?
ABOUT WHAT?

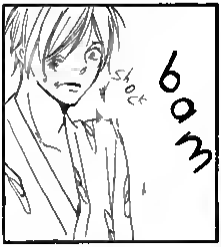

WHAT MEMORIES!? YOU GOT BEATEN UP AGAIN!
HE SAID HE WANTED TO CREATE SOME MEMORIES
I TOLD YOU TO BREAK UP WITH HIM!

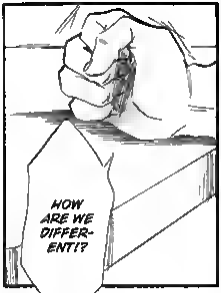
ARE YOU KIDDING!? YOU BROKE UP A FEW MONTHS AGO!
THAT'S WHY HE SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE IT OFFICIAL. THIS WOULD'VE BEEN OUR LAST TRIP TOGETHER!


WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
KENGO, YOU DON'T KNOW ANY-THING.
GEEZ!
SLUMP
TO TEST THIS HE HITS ME
HE'S AFRAID NOBODY WILL WANT HIM.
THAT GUY HAS THE SAME PROBLEMS I HAVE
SHUT UP! LEAVE ME ALONE!
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE THE ONE WHO GETS BEATEN UP!?

He's actually angry enough to shout at me...
In the past, no matter how I scolded him,
he would only give me this helpless smile
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ANYWAY?
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO SEE MY UGLIEST SIDE?
What would a hetero like you know?
IF we don't lick each other's wounds, we can't go on! How dare you preach as if you understand!
HIDETOSHI
It's none of your business anyway!

HOW OFTEN DO YOU THINK I'VE BEEN WORRIED FOR YOU?
AND YOU CAN ACTUALLY SAY IT'S NOT MY BUSINESS!?
NOT MY BUSI-NESS!?
Are you taking it out on me?
But...
WH...
WHAT?
IF that's so why did you always come to me after every beating?
Why were you always showing me your most vulnerable side?
...WEREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO SAID THAT WE WERE NEVER IN THAT TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP, KENGO?





It was the same then

Before I could salvage the situation Hidetoshi assumed the conversation was over

Stop jumping to con-clusions!

SO YOU'LL LET ANYONE WHO WANTS TO HOLD YOU!?
YES, I WILL!
ANYONE WILL DO!
KANAZAWA-SAN UNDER-STOOD THIS AT LEAST,
AND
HE HELD ME
SO YOU'RE SAYING I'M NOT AS GOOD AS THAT GUY BECAUSE I'M NOT GAY!?
THAT'S JUST BULLSHIT!
YOU'LL NEVER KNOW HOW RARE IT IS TO FIND SOMEONE WHO'S WILLING TO BE WITH ANOTHER MAN!

BECAUSE I CAN'T STAND BEING LONELY ANYMORE...!
JUST SO YOU KNOW. AFTER I BROKE UP WITH HIM, I WAS STILL SEEKING OTHER MEN FOR COMFORT!
What do you mean you're lonely?
How long have I been silently watching over you?
I messed up because I was young and stupid.
I couldn't forget that day but I couldn't bring myself to declare my feelings,
so I settled for this ambiguous friendship instead.

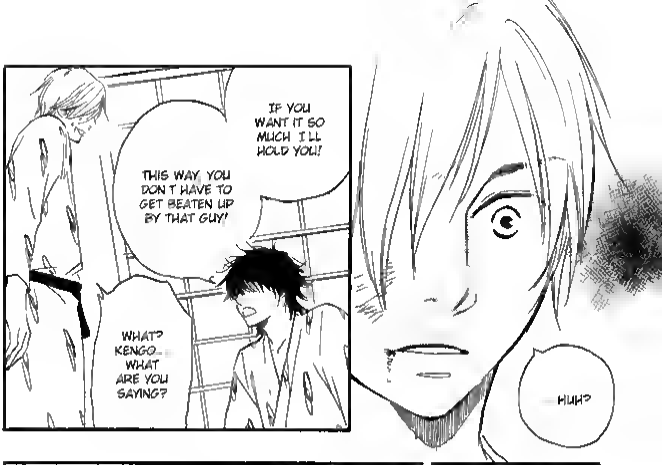
Every time Hidetoshi showed me his bruised face, it was like self-mutilation to me.

And every time he was hurt, I was hurt too.

Things wouldn't be like this now if I understood your feelings back then, would they?

IF THAT'S THE CASE

YOU CAN SETTLE FOR ME


IF YOU WANT IT SO MUCH I'LL HOLD YOU!
THIS WAY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET BEATEN UP BY THAT GUY!
WHAT? KENGO... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
HUH?

BE QUIET!
grab
KENGO!
!?

thud
YOU'RE JOKING RIGHT?
DO I LOOK LIKE I'M JOKING?

KENGO, STOP IT!
WHY? YOU SAID ANYONE WILL DO!
ANYONE BUT YOU...
NO!
DON'T...!
...NGH!
...MPH!

NO...
NN'
smack
lick
Pant
smack
suck
DON'T...
Haa
Haa
Ah..
Haa
.....

I KNOW YOU CAN'T DO IT
IT'S NOT ABOUT WHETHER I CAN OR CAN'T
I SAID *I WILL!*

第3話

KENGO,
CAN YOU GET HARD WITH ME?
I'M NOT A GIRL. YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IT FROM BEHIND.
!
I'LL CONFIRM THAT FOR MYSELF
I'M ALREADY HARD
YOU'LL HAVE TO TOUCH AND WET THAT PART BEFORE YOU CAN ENTER
YOU'RE GOING TO BE DISGUSTED HALFWAY THROUGH, YOU KNOW

IT'S PROBABLY JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE ANGRY
IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT IT FEEL IT FOR YOURSELF!
grab
!
AM I THE TYPE TO GET HARD FROM BEING ANGRY?
DO YOU THINK I'M A PERVERT?
.....
grab

YOU'LL
DEFINITELY REGRET THIS TOMORROW
brush
kiss
kiss kiss
LET'S FIND OUT TOMORROW THEN
...STOP PRO-TESTING.

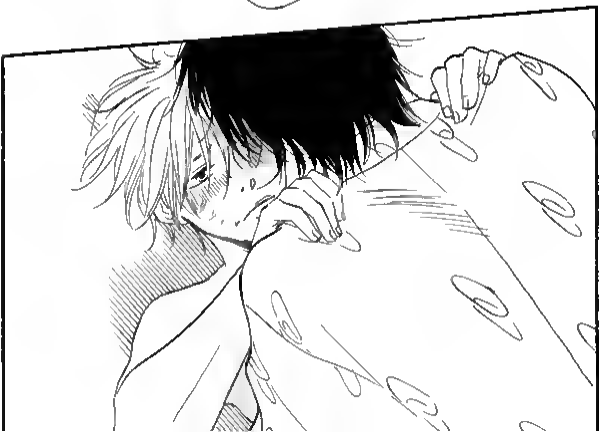
If you were to ask me whether this is love frankly I don't know

Every time Hidetoshi was in danger or hurt my heart felt like it was being pierced

AH!
NN...!
AH DAMN IT!
HE'S NOT FEELING ANYTHING!
Having sex is easy.
It just needs the opportunity, following up with the act.
Even if we don't know whether it's love or not we can still have sex.

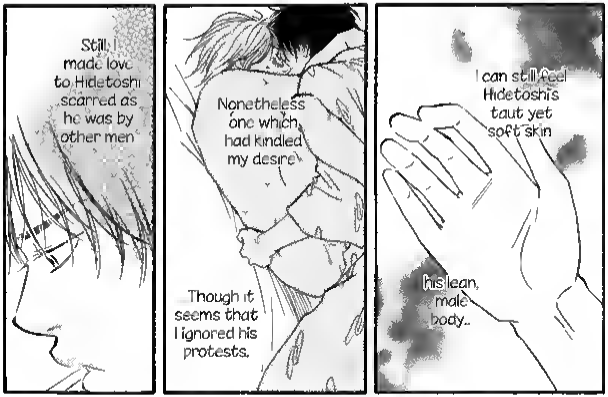
I feel something for Hidetoshi.
I didn't understand what it meant when I was younger
And even though I'm an adult now, I still can't describe this feeling.

YOU ARE CRUEL KENGO.



Bliss

chirr
chirr
chirr
AGAIN
HE RAN AWAY AGAIN
Che!
flick
pound


Still, I made love to Hidetoshi scarred as he was by other men
Nonetheless one which had kindled my desire
Though it seems that I ignored his protests.
I can still feel Hidetoshi's taut yet soft skin
his lean, male body..

But I still can't figure out what I feel for him.
I won't allow Hidetoshi to be hurt by others,
whether physically or otherwise
But I don't know what these feelings mean

Hidetoshi seemed really sad when he was in my arms.
"You are cruel."
His low voice made it even harder for me to think.

But Hidetoshi has run away from me again...
I could've seen his expression this morning, perhaps I wouldn't be feeling this perplexed...
If...
DAMN IT—
WHAT DID HE MEAN BY THAT ANYWAY!?

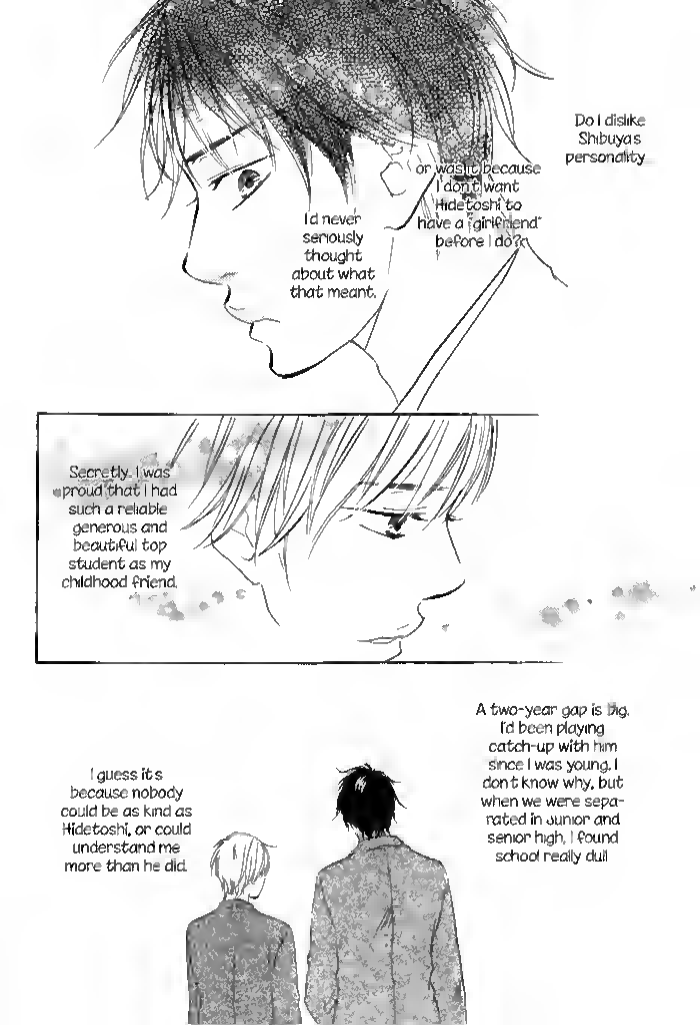
Please, please give me more time!
Don't just conclude that I was being impulsive last night
BEFORE I RESOLVE TO BE WITH YOU PLEASE GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME...
He's always jumping to conclusions.
this bad habit of his has never changed.
tap tap tap

slam
HIDETOSHI! HIDETOSHI!
会議室
*Meeting room
HOW DO I LOOK?
chuckle
—IT REALLY IS OVER THE TOP,
BUT YOU MANAGED TO PULL IT OFF
HEHE! REALLY?

THERE HASN'T BEEN A CHEERLEADER WHO'S WORN IT FOR FOUR YEARS
IT CAN'T BE HELPED
THAT'S WHY YOU WERE MADE VICE-CAPTAIN
WELL, IT OUGHT TO BE THE CHEERLEADING COMPETITION IS A HIGHLIGHT OF GAMES DAY*!
BUT THIS UNIFORM'S PRETTY MOTH-EATEN...
*Games day is the annual sports festival at Japanese schools
And with my baseball practice and Hidetoshi's college prep, we were pretty much apart most of the time.
Because we were in different grades it was hard to spend time together
LET'S GO HOME TOGETHER TODAY!
OKAY
Awe-Some!
MUTSUURA-KUN SURE ACTS LIKE A PUPPY AROUND SAWAKI!
So I was really happy when I could finally spend time with Hidetoshi, who was on the executive committee for Games Day
DO YOU FEEL LIKE RAMEN? MY TREAT.

SORRY, SAWAKI, COULD YOU CONFIRM THIS?
OH, SURE
JUST WHAT I SAID. YOU'RE LIKE A LOYAL PUPPY!
muttered
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT, SHIBUYA-SENPAI?
SORRY, KENGO! SEE YOU LATER.
rattle
I felt like I'd just been shut out of something so I was bored
Shibuya-senpai was a star in our school thanks to her combination of brains and beauty
OKAY

Because they got along so well it was rumored that she and Hidetoshi were dating
For some reason that really bugged me...
HEY, ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT DATING?
OF COURSE NOT
SHIBUYA'S JUST MY CLASSMATE.
I... DON'T REALLY LIKE HER MUCH
WHY NOT? SHE'S NICE
THEN WHY DID SHE CALL ME A DOG?
SHE'S JUST JOKING. LET IT GO


Do I dislike Shibuya's personality
or was it because I don't want Hidetoshi to have a "girlfriend" before I do?
I'd never seriously thought about what that meant.
Secretly, I was proud that I had such a reliable generous and beautiful top student as my childhood friend.
A two-year gap is big. I'd been playing catch-up with him since I was young. I don't know why, but when we were separated in junior and senior high, I found school really dull
I guess it's because nobody could be as kind as Hidetoshi, or could understand me more than he did.

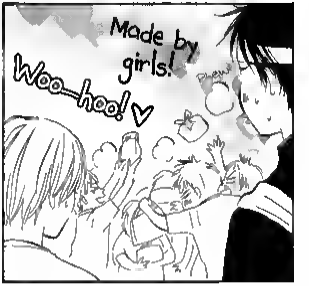
THAT WON'T HAPPEN.
BE SURE TO TELL ME IF YOU GET A GIRLFRIEND!
I SUPPOSE, BUT...
YOU'LL DEFINITELY GET A GIRLFRIEND BEFORE I DO
WHY?
YOU'LL FIND OUT ON GAMES DAY.
?
場門

Whoa
...What is
all this!?
Hidetoshi! What's all this?
A BUNCH OF GIRLS I'VE NEVER SEEN JUST GAVE THESE TO ME!
Ah, I dropped some!
実行委員
沢木
*Sign: Committee men
IS THAT SO...
THEY'RE SUPERSTARS SO TO SPEAK! SO THEY GET A LOT OF ATTENTION
So lucky.
I thought that was weird
No wonder I've been photographed non-stop since mom ma
沢木
POOL
I TOLD YOU,
CHEERLEADERS ARE POPULAR
実行委員
沢木

Oh...
Makes me sick...
WELL, THESE HANDMADE LUNCHES ARE TOO SCARY FOR ME TO EAT
YOU REALLY DON'T LIKE THIS STUFF.

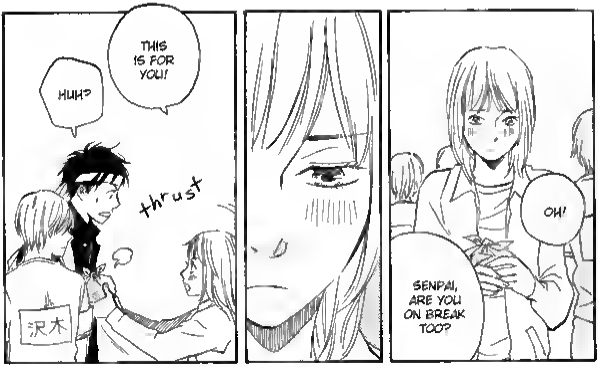
WELL, IT'S LIKE BEING FLAVOR OF THE MONTH, SO DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD
chuckle

HEY!
DOES ANYONE WANT THESE LUNCHES?


Made by girls!
Woo-hoo!♡
Blush!

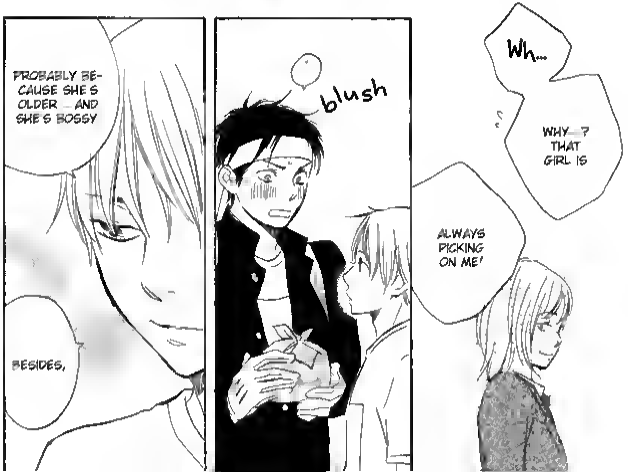
Done!
LET'S GO FOR LUNCH!
KENGO, IS THIS REALLY OKAY?

DID YOU MAKE TAMAGO-YAKI*?
...OF COURSE,
SINCE YOU LIKE IT SO MUCH.
Having spent my childhood following him around, it was like having a second mother cook for me
Hidetoshi was in charge of cooking since his parents were busy working.
*Eggs cooked in a roll shape.
YEAH! YOURS ARE THE BEST!
WHAT?
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE TASTED YOUR COOKING
Phew~ So hot
MITSU-URA-KUN
YOUR BREAK IS SHORT, SO LET'S HURRY AND GO TO THE ROOF OR SOMEWHERE TO EAT—



*Shirt = Sumaki

Huh?
SHIBUYA LIKES YOU KENGO.
HAVEN'T YOU REALIZED?


PROBABLY BECAUSE SHE'S OLDER... AND SHE'S BOSSY
BESIDES,
blush
Wh...
WHY...? THAT GIRL IS
ALWAYS PICKING ON ME!

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU ACTUALLY LIKE HER, RIGHT?
HOW SO?
I SAID I DON'T REALLY GET ALONG WITH HER
YOU'VE NOTICED IT TOO, HAVEN'T YOU, KENGO?
Is that why...?
GO FIND HER!
YEAH, YOU SHOULD
SHOULD I, REALLY?

OKAY
OH,
I THINK YOU SHOULD
GO ON THEN!
Pat
Back then I had no idea,
what Hidetoshi was feeling as he said those words
But because it was my most trusted friend who suggested it I

I don't know what kind of expression Hidetoshi had when I left him there like that
It wasn't so much that I liked Shibuya rather her confession just made it seemed like the natural flow for us to date
After I told Hidetoshi about it he started avoiding me.
YOU'VE GOT A GIRLFRIEND RIGHT? YOU SHOULD PUT HER FIRST!
After school that day Shibuya-senpai and I became a couple
Bliss

I TOLD YOU IT WOULD HAPPEN! YOU FOUND A GIRLFRIEND BEFORE I DID.
You looked as though you completely understood me
It was the first time that I really couldn't stand you.
Why!?
Why can't I spend time with Hidetoshi just because I have a girlfriend?
It was also the first time that I realized...
I didn't know Hidetoshi as well as I thought

第4話

I was happier spending time with my childhood friend than with my girlfriend,
even if it seemed childish
Call me a brat
but was I wrong to think this way?
sweep
sweep
sweep

I'M LATE FOR PREP SCHOOL
SORRY, ABOUT
AH! HIDE-TOSHI!
Annoyed
Not again
Sure!
FINE!
BUT AUNTIE MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU WHEN YOU GET HOME!
HUH...? OH
OKAY, GOT IT

What the hell
I know that it's hard to spend time together now that I've got a girlfriend, but still
Che!
WHY GO TO THIS EXTENT JUST TO AVOID ME
I don't know why, but I always felt ready to call things off when I was dating Shibuya-senpai
During that time I discovered that having a girlfriend wasn't always a good thing
KEN-GO
LET'S GO HOME!

SEN-PAI
CAN'T YOU TELL I'M STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF CLUB ACTIVITIES?
EH?
SO WE CAN'T LEAVE TOGETHER AGAIN?
I'M A FIRST YEAR,
SO IT'S MY JOB TO CLEAN UP, BESIDES...
UH...
WELL, THEN, CAN I CALL YOU TONIGHT?
MY PARENTS WILL START NAGGING IF IT'S AFTER NINE...
Pout

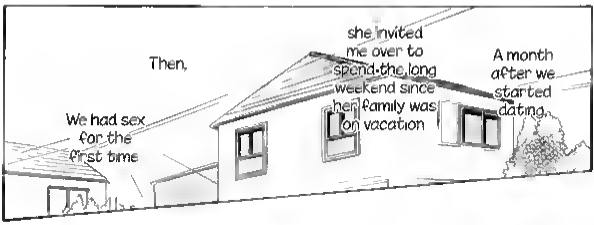
Back then, mobile phones were considered expensive "toys"
My parents would have cut off my allowance to buy me one, so no thanks.
UH—
THEY WON'T LET ME HAVE ONE EITHER
WELL, WHY NOT BUY A MOBILE PHONE THEN?
GEEZ
WHY? ARE THEY REALLY THAT STRICT?
NOT REALLY YOU SEE SENPAI—
...DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO CALL ME MICHIRU?

THE THING IS, I JUST FIND TALKING ON THE PHONE A PAIN
Frankly, I was just using my parents as an excuse
But I couldn't bring myself to say this aloud
brush
WELL, FORGET THE MOBILE PHONE
LET'S GO WATCH A MOVIE THIS SUNDAY!
Hey, Mutsuki's a jerk!
I TOLD YOU I HAVE CLUB ACTIVITIES THAT DAY
THEY'RE GOING TO BE MAD AT ME!
THE SENIORS ARE LOOKING AT US
Well, well
shrug
...TSK!
FORGET IT!

Smack
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
YOU LIKE MAKING YOUR GIRL-FRIEND CRY?
Geez! What gives? Was that my fault?
YOU'RE AN IDIOT!
WHAT!?
turn
SHE WANTED TO SEE YOU...
"Don't we?" you say.
Don't we?
DON'T WE HAVE PRACTICE THAT DAY?
THAT...
SHE JUST ASSUMED THAT I WOULD BE FREE TO MEET HER THIS SUNDAY!

EVEN IF SHE WANTS TO GO ON A DATE...
I'M NOT GOOD AT THOSE THINGS! AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TALK ABOUT!
Uh huh.
AH...
WELL
You whore!
YOU'RE TOO MUCH. SHE'S YOUR GIRLFRIEND Y'KNOW! SHE OBVIOUSLY WANTS TO GO ON A DATE!
Ouuu!
Whack
BUT...
heh heh heh
BUT, HEY!
THERE'RE BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN TALK!
WHAT A LECHEROUS SMILE!
Whoa!
You've done it!
Ugh
HOW'D HE GUESS?
Geh!
SO, HAVE YOU GUYS DONE IT YET? OR NOT?
DON'T TELL ANYONE, OKAY?

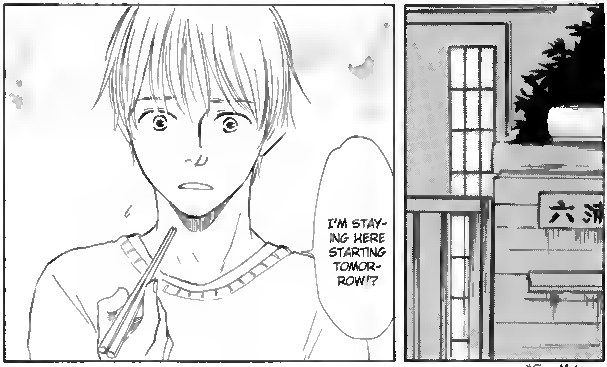
It's not all it's cracked up to be...
So senpai's done it too?
...If I had, would you still be hanging out with a punk like you?
You pervert!
Gya_!!
I'm gonna fall!
WELL, YOU'VE BEEN GOING OUT FOR TWO MONTHS
IT'S ABOUT TIME
Uh huh
I had nothing in common with senpai, a top student who liked movies and music.
Our dates ended with my accompanying her shopping, which was such a drag.
And alone in the room, even the briefest of touches developed into more rather quickly, because she was older and took the lead.


Then,
she invited me over to spend the long weekend since her family was on vacation
A month after we started dating
We had sex for the first time

Did I really lose interest... Or was I even interested in her to begin with?

Hidetoshi... What's he doing now?

Bliss
http://bliss.fanserved.com



*Sign. Matsuura

OH?
KENGO DIDN'T TELL YOU? WE'RE GOING ON A VACATION
UH, THAT...
I WAS IN A BIT OF A RUSH, SO...
MOM, WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST TELL ME?
I WANTED TO, BUT YOU KEPT SAYING YOU'RE BUSY WITH PREP SCHOOL...
ANYWAY, IT'S ALL SET!
WE'VE FINALLY GOT THE COMPANY'S HOLIDAY VOUCHERS.
ONLY FOR FOUR, BUT YOU TWO HAVE SCHOOL ANYWAY, RIGHT?
annoyed
YOU DON'T WANT TO?
I JUST HAVE TO COME OVER TO COOK...
THE MUTSUURA FAMILY HAS LOOKED AFTER US SO MUCH, THIS TIME IT'S YOUR TURN TO LOOK AFTER KENGO
BUT,
THERE'S NO NEED FOR ME TO SLEEP OVER!

flap
HIDETOSHI, CAN'T YOU HELP US?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT, BUT KENGO HAS HIS OWN PLANS TOO
IF HE'S LEFT ALONE HE'LL DO SOMETHING STUPID.
knock
HE ACTUALLY SPENT THE ENTIRE LONG WEEKEND AT SOME GIRL'S HOUSE!
Urgh!
NO KIDDING! DON'T SCREW THINGS UP WILL YOU?
OH, MY!
HE'S AT THAT AGE NOW!?
IT WASN'T LIKE THAT...
Hidetoshi?
Surely not
WAIT, WAIT, HIDEMI-SAN!

Smile
Ah!
PLEASE!
I'M SORRY, BUT COULD YOU HELP LOOK AFTER HIM?
I'LL FEEL BETTER KNOWING YOU'RE AROUND
I DON'T WANT HIM BRINGING SOME GIRL HOME!
I'M FINE WITH IT!
!
I DON'T MIND, BUT IS IT ALL RIGHT WITH KENGO?
shance

LET ME USE THE KITCHEN FIRST, YOU CAN HELP ME LATER.
PARDON THE INTRUSION
WELCOME!
rustle
step step
DON'T FALL ASLEEP STANDING THERE!
Oh! I brought spare clothes. Take them to the guest room for me!
Yeah, yeah!

Hidetoshi seemed perfectly all right now that we're talking

Although I had thought of asking him why he's been avoiding me,

Speaking of which

Was he really avoiding me?
YOU LIKE THOSE MOVIES?
YEAH, I REALLY LIKE THIS DIRECTOR
I WONDER IF IT'S STILL ON
I REALLY WANT TO WATCH THAT MOVIE
OH!
NAH, MOM'S COOKING IS GREAT TOO!
ALINTIE WILL BE JEALOUS
He he
NOW, SENPAI SHE
Ah!
Maybe it was having a girlfriend that made me more sensitive
AH... THAT TASTED GREAT!
YOUR COOKING IS THE BEST!

...HOW'S IT GOING WITH SHIBUYA?
I
NOTHING MUCH
But I don't want to discuss senpai with Hidetoshi
I don't know why...
clatter
IT'S NOTHING! I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT MICHIRU RIGHT NOW!
SPEAKING OF WHICH...
NO NEED TO BE SHY! SHE MADE YOU LUNCH FOR GAMES DAY, RIGHT?

I'M GOING TO TAKE A BATH!
I refuse to talk about the girl who came between us.
Not while it feels just like old times!
I didn't see Hidetoshi's expression as I left him there
The bath helped me to calm down

That part of him has never changed.
Hidetoshi was always doing this. He'd call me "hopeless" and accept my impatient self-absorbed behavior
pout
YOU ALWAYS SLEEP IN MY ROOM!
I insisted that he sleep in my room
When Hidetoshi said he would sleep in the guest room
We played some games chatted about random things, and then I fell asleep
yawn
zzz-
turn

HUH? MY MIND'S AWAKE...?
BUT MY BODY'S
rise
?
lean
open

..Huh?
Hidetoshi... What's wrong?
Why do you look so heart-broken?

I still can't move
WHAT? A DREAM ?
I THOUGHT HE KISSED ME
MORN-ING
Your hair's a mess!
he he he
Sheesh
chuckle
MORNING

Last night really must have been a dream...
And a weird one, too
It was typical Hidetoshi.
Go wash up. This is first breakfast!
Oh! Tamago-yaki!♡
I'll grab a bite ♡
I'M SKIPPING PRACTICE WANNA WATCH A MOVIE? YOU WANTED TO YESTERDAY
NO, WHY?
HEY! HIDETOSHI ARE YOU DOING ANYTHING AFTER SCHOOL TODAY?
SURE!
It was starting to dawn on me
NOT THAT I WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO SKIP PRACTICE... BUT IS IT OKAY?

Nothing Shibuya-senpai said would've gotten me to do what I didn't want to
but when Hidetoshi was concerned no nagging was needed
I'm breaking up with Senpai.
MAYBE IT'S TOO EARLY FOR ME TO BE DATING GIRLS
That was what I decided

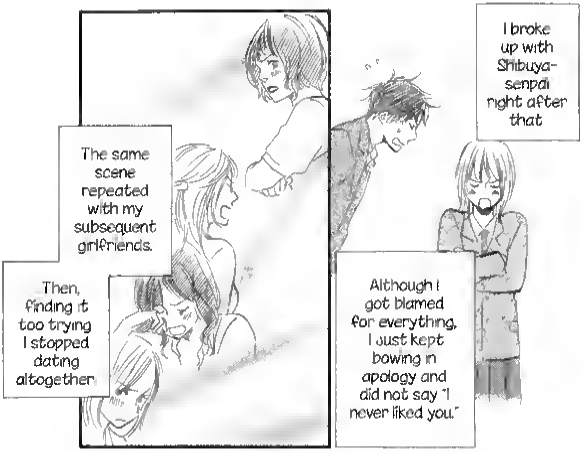
Acting dumb was easier

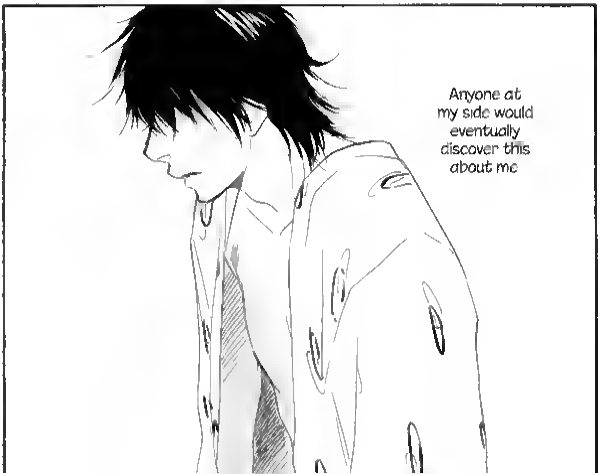
It took me ten years to see that I was taking the easy way out by not being honest about my feelings.

I was really oblivious

When it came to the anguished Hidetoshi who had to steal a kiss and then act as if nothing had happened

It wasn't a dream


I broke up with Shibuya-senpai right after that
Although I got blamed for everything, I just kept bowing in apology and did not say "I never liked you."
The same scene repeated with my subsequent girlfriends.
Then, finding it too trying I stopped dating altogether.


Anyone at my side would eventually discover this about me

I'd listen attentively and do it, no matter how trifling or willful
As long as it could make him smile...
I didn't want to see his tear-stained or his bruised and battered face.

In the end,
the only person
who can make
me feel this way
is Hidetoshi.

第5話

R-r-r-r
R-r-r-r...
r-r-r.

WHY ARE YOU MOPING AROUND HERE?
YOUR WORK'S DONE RIGHT? WHY NOT GO HOME?
OR DO YOU WANT TO HELP ME?
UH SURE
SO JUST TRANSCRIBE THIS TAPE, RIGHT?
clack
UH
R-RIGHT, JUST THAT

WH-
WHAT?
HEY
SINCE I'M HELPING YOU OUT HERE, CAN I TALK TO YOU AFTERWARDS?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
NORMALLY YOU'D SAY "DREAM ON" OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
OKAY.
I'VE NO IDEA WHAT IT IS,
BUT HE LOOKS REALLY MOODY.

NO PROBLEM.
ANYWAY, YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT HELP.
THANKS!
gulp
gulp
gulp
WELL?
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
IT'S RARE FOR YOU TO CONFIDE IN ME IS THERE A PROBLEM AT WORK?

AH, SAWAKI-SAN, HUH?
Sorry for the wait!
NO
IT'S NOT WORK
IT'S PER-SONAL
WHAT NOW? HAS HE GONE BACK TO THAT ABUSIVE JERK?
YOU USUALLY GET THAT LOOK WHEN SAWAKI-SAN'S INVOLVED
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "TOO"?
WHAT ELSE HAPPENED?
THAT HAPPENED TOO

Bliss
http://bliss.fanseed-yaoi.net

...ASKING ME THAT WHEN YOU KNOW HOW OLD I AM!
NO, I'M SERIOUS.
YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE NOBODY WANTS ME!
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE IN LOVE?
chew chew
HE'S NOT LISTENING AT ALL...
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN LOVE?
IT GENERALLY MEANS,
YOU LIKE SOMEONE
WHO MAY OR MAY NOT RETURN YOUR FEELINGS
THEN WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIKE SOMEONE?

SORRY, I'VE READ BOOKS EXPLAINING THE ATTRACTION TO ABUSIVE PARTNERS,
IS THIS ABOUT SAWAKI-SAN TOO?
BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT TYPE OF CO-DEPENDENT RELATION-SHIP.
NO, IT'S NOT ABOUT THAT
THEN WHAT IS IT?
STOP BEATING AROUND THE BUSHES AND GET TO THE POINT!
YOUR BRO-THER
ASAHI-KUN'S AN ORDINARY KID, RIGHT?
HE'S YOUNG, BUT REALLY CHEERFUL
AND HE'S GOT A BOY-FRIEND

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
WHAT IS IT TO LIKE SOMEONE? TO BE IN LOVE?
THE THINGS THAT EVEN HE KNOWS ABOUT,
— SO WHAT?
WHY AM I GIVING MYSELF A MIGRAINE OVER THIS?
IF IT WERE A GIRL IT'D BE SIMPLE
Try talking in a way that oneesan here can understand
Mutsuura Kengo-Kun,
are you drunk after one mug of beer?
HEY.
HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU TWO?
WE DID IT.

WELL! FINALLY,
HUH?
!
WH WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "FINALLY"!?
JUST WHAT I SAID!
YOU'RE TOO CLOSE TO BE CALLED BUDDIES,
AND SAWAKI-SAN'S GAY, RIGHT?
SEEMED TO ME ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS FOR YOU TO DISCOVER YOUR OWN FEELINGS
WHY ELSE WOULD I HAVE TALKED TO YOU ABOUT MY BROTHER?
WHEN YOU SAY WE'RE TOO CLOSE...
YOU MEAN...

EVERY TIME SAWAKI-SAN GOT BEATEN UP, HE TURNED TO YOU FOR REFUGE
YOU WANTED HIM TO BREAK UP WITH THAT GUY, WORRYING INCESSANTLY ABOUT IT
MUTSUURA, DO YOU KNOW HOW OFTEN YOU ASKED FOR MY ADVICE ABOUT THIS?
"Mutsuura, why not just date him yourself?"
I never... Realized it myself...
WHEN YOU GOT A GIRL-FRIEND,
WASN'T THAT AROUND THE TIME SAWAKI-SAN GOT INTO THAT ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?
THAT'S QUITE COMMON WITH GAY COUPLES.
AND WHEN HE'S WITH YOU HE'S LIKE PUTTY IN YOUR HANDS
PUTTY ...!?

OR MAYBE TRUSTING IS A BETTER WORD?
I GUESS IT'S NOT SURPRISING YOU'RE THIS WORRIED SINCE HE'S THE ONLY MALE CONFIDANT YOU HAVE
AND YOU SEEM TO BE THE ONLY ONE SAWAKI-SAN CAN OPEN UP TO
AT THE RISK OF SOUNDING COCKY,
I THINK HE'S IN LOVE WITH ME
Duh! That's obvious.
BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND MY OWN FEELINGS,
EVEN MORE SO AFTER HE RAN AWAY!

It's been like this ever since he ran away from me at the hot springs and came back to Tokyo.
It's been two weeks, but he won't answer my calls.
But I don't want to push him too hard.
Even though Hidetoshi jumped to conclusions and is avoiding me I feel that I need to give him some time
But the longer I wait, the more I worry that he'll reject me...
In fact
I even find myself questioning whether I'm any different from his other partners. If our being together only hurts him.

TO ME BEING IN LOVE WAS CARRYING ON WITH SOME GIRL IN SOME CORNER,
BUT I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND IT NOW
THE ATTRACTION'S MUTUAL
BUT,
IN OUR CASE, THE LOVE WHICH IS SUPPOSEDLY SWEET,
IS STRANGE INSTEAD
WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN BEST FRIENDS,
WE CAN'T JUST CHANGE OVERNIGHT
I even understand a little why those guys would hit Hidetoshi...
By remaining detached while they hold him, Hidetoshi gives his lovers a sense of palpable hollowness, like trying to describe with words what can only be felt.

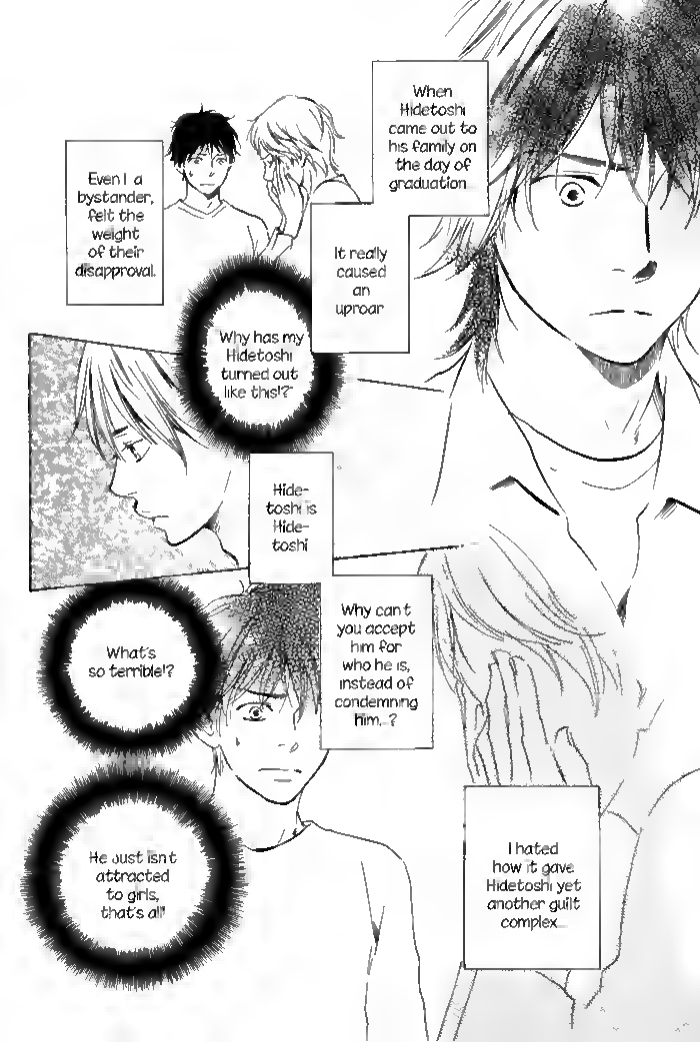
SO WHAT'S LOVE, YOU ASK?
YOU ARE STUPID!
AS FOR LOVE BEING SWEET, THAT'S JUST YOUR FANTASY, ISN'T IT?
tense
Hmph!
I'M THAT SELFISH.
BUT, I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO HAVE HIM.
HAS IT NEVER OCCURRED TO YOU THAT YOU'RE TOGETHER BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT YOU BOTH WANT?
I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS, BUT YOU'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FROM CHILDHOOD,
AND YOU'VE STAYED FRIENDS UNTIL NOW?
THAT COULD ONLY BE POSSIBLE IF NEITHER OF YOU WERE WILLING TO PART.

THEN WHY IS HE AVOIDING ME?
HE OBVIOUSLY KNOWS HOW I FEEL
WHY WON'T HE TELL ME DIRECTLY?
Whether it's that stolen kiss,
or the day of graduation,
or that night at the hot springs.
But he hasn't done anything like that, so I don't know what to do either
Had he insisted on a definite answer from me I wouldn't have hesitated to tell him how I feel

SO HAVE YOU FIGURED IT OUT YET?
OR ARE YOU STILL CONFUSED?
Grr!
TCH!
Heh
I KNOW THAT
YOU'VE BEEN LETTING SAWAKI-SAN SPOIL YOU
I've always known how much he cares for me. I just pretended not to notice.

WELL, SAWAKI-SAN INDULGES YOU TOO,
BUT HE CAN'T HELP IT
ONCE HE BECAME SO HAPPILY ATTACHED TO "SOMEONE"
HE CAN'T HELP GIVING IN
AND NOW
YOU'RE DITHERING OVER WHICH PATH TO TAKE. WHILE...
SAWAKI-SAN'S ALSO DITHERING OVER WHETHER HE SHOULD PUSH YOU IN THAT DIRECTION.
DIREC-TION...?

IT'S JUST A GUESS, BUT I THINK HE REALLY CHERISHES YOU
THAT'S WHY...
Haa...
HONESTLY
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T GET WHY HE'S BEEN AVOIDING YOU?
?
IN MY FAMILY I'M THE ONLY ONE SO FAR WHO KNOWS ASAHI'S GAY
HIS PARENTS MUST HAVE BEEN FURIOUS
SAWAKI-SAN'S COME OUT ALREADY RIGHT?
WHY WHAT?

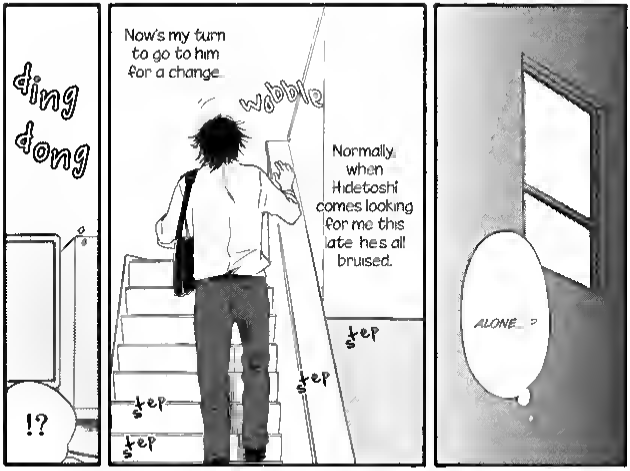

When Hidetoshi came out to his family on the day of graduation...
It really caused an uproar
Even I, a bystander, felt the weight of their disapproval.
Why has my Hidetoshi turned out like this!?
Hide-toshi is Hide-toshi
Why can't you accept him for who he is, instead of condemning him...?
What's so terrible!?
He just isn't attracted to girls, that's all!
I hated how it gave Hidetoshi yet another guilt complex...

How much Hidetoshi suffered just for being gay,
wasn't something I would have understood then.
What's more,
when I should have spoken up for him
I did nothing.
ARE YOU OKAY WITH IT?

ARE YOU PREPARED TO GIVE UP EVERYTHING FOR SAWAKI-SAN?
OF COURSE I AM
BUT EVEN SO…
WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?
HE'S STILL THE SAME TO ME
NOTHING'S CHANGED THERE
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO BEAR IT
BUT IT'S MEANINGLESS WITHOUT HIM.

IT'S NOT SO MUCH ADVICE AS CONFIRMATION THAT YOU WANT FROM ME, RIGHT?
GUESS SO?
DREAM ON! WE'RE NOT CLOSE ENOUGH FOR ME TO BE SO OBLIGING! FIGURE OUT THE REST YOURSELF!
OH, SORRY
SO LOVE IS STILL POSSIBLE
ANYWAY, YOU'VE WORKED OUT YOUR PRIORITIES, RIGHT?
GUESS SO
Heh, heh
Advice doesn't come cheap!
Well then, you're buying!
Wait
WASN'T THIS THANKS FOR HELPING YOU OUT!?
Excuse me! Please give us another full course and your most expensive drink!
Geh!
Menu

DAMN IT...
Thanks for the food!
THAT LUSH...
HIDETOSHI
THE LIGHT'S ON. HE'S HOME?


ding dong
!?
Now's my turn to go to him for a change.
wobble
Normally, when Hidetoshi comes looking for me this late he's all bruised.
step
step
step
step
ALONE...?

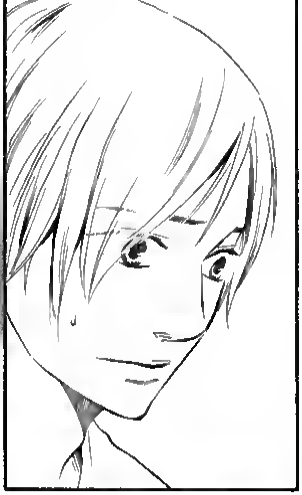
!
ding dong

silence
OPEN UP! I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU
YOU'RE THERE, AREN'T YOU, HIDETOSHI?
—PRETENDING YOU'RE NOT IN?

NEVER MIND THEN I'LL SAY IT RIGHT HERE!
THE LAST TIME WE MADE LOVE.
!!
wham
!
glower
Yo!

lean
KENGO, YOUR HAND...
S-
SORRY!
slam
!!
OWW!
stagger
shut
Ah
IT'S OKAY.
YOU TRICKED ME!?

I'M DRUNK, SO I NEED TO CRASH HERE
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
turn



What was still a natural thing a few weeks ago

I'm really afraid of changing things between us.

has become so awkward now

but the most frightening thing has already happened

第6話

YOU'RE HOPELESS
I'LL GET YOU A FUTON. WHAT TIME SHOULD I WAKE YOU UP TOMORROW?
WHAT 'BOUT YOU?
MY WORK'S PRETTY FLEXIBLE SO IT DOESN'T MATTER.
hug

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
bang
HUG-GING YOU
KENGO, WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?
OF YOU.
creak
creak

*thunk
I'M BACK WITH KANAZAWA-SAN
I WON'T DO IT WITH YOU AGAIN
I DON'T CARE!
I FORBID YOU TO BE WITH THAT ABUSIVE JERK!

IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, RIGHT?
WHY ARE YOU SAYING THAT, KENGO?
"None of your business."
The words which pushed me over the edge that night
EVEN IF YOU HATED DOING IT WITH ME, WE MADE LOVE ANYWAY.
Don't think you can use the same bait twice
AND I WASN'T WEARING A CONDOM WHEN I CAME INSIDE YOU.
IT SURE IS AFTER THAT NIGHT!
Bliss

I'D SAY IT'S MY BUSINESS!
blush
WHAT !?
WHY DID YOU RUN AWAY?
I'VE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU EVER SINCE THAT NIGHT

turn
grab
I HAVE NOT—
DIDN'T YOU KISS ME WHILE I WAS SLEEPING?
AND ON GRADUATION DAY,
YOU LOOKED READY TO CRY BECAUSE I SAID WE WERE JUST FRIENDS, RIGHT?
YOU, HIDETOSHI
THANKS TO YOU, I'VE BEEN RACKING MY BRAINS LIKE A HALF-WIT
HAVE BEEN IN LOVE WITH ME FOR A LONG TIME

YOU KNOW I'D NEVER DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT
YOU HELD ME OUT OF PITY?
RIGHT,
SO...
Sigh
YOU KNEW
!

thump
I WANT TO CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE!
I GET MAD WHEN YOU TELL ME IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS!
YOU'RE JUST BEING CHILDISHLY POSSESSIVE
DON'T TRY TO RATIONALIZE IT!
MAKING LOVE TO YOU WAS THE BEST FEELING EVER!

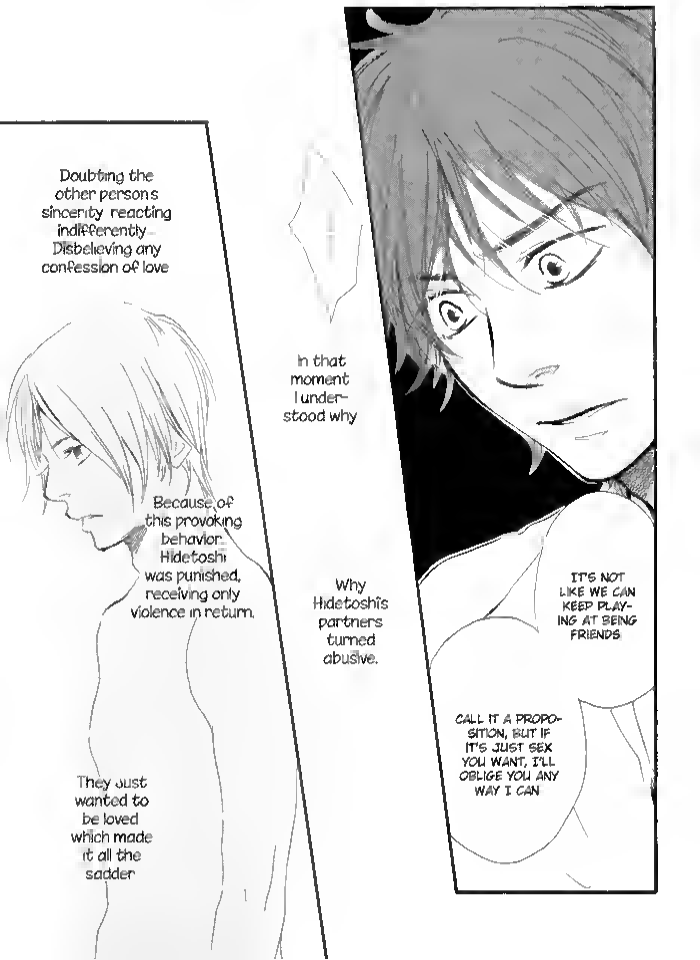
K-KENGO...
WHEN YOUR PUBIC HAIR STARTED GROWING I INSISTED ON SEEING IT EVEN THOUGH YOU DIDN'T WANT TO SHOW ME
WE MADE LOVE
slide
WHAT COULD I HAVE FOUND DISGUSTING?
WE BATHED TOGETHER EVEN IN OUR TEENS! I'VE SEEN EVERYTHING THERE IS TO SEE ABOUT YOUR BODY!
WE'RE MORE THAN FRIENDS NOW!
I SAID SO JUST NOW
Stop it...

Just like when we were growing up, just like how we've always been
As you always have, laugh at me, call me hopeless and forgive everything I do.
Don't make that face!
Don't stop me from doing this

I really want to make love to him right now.
but
CUB
Then I'd be the same as those abusive men.
I WON'T DO IT IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO.
ALTHOUGH I REALLY WANT TO, I WON'T FORCE YOU.

LETTING ME KISS YOU WILL DO
AND
BREAK UP WITH KANAZAWA
WHY DO YOU MIND KANA-ZAWA-SAN SO MUCH...?
Because I hate it!
He hit you, and he did it with you!
I hate it so much I can't stand it!
WHY...

KUH ?
LET'S DO IT THEN.
sigh...
FINE YOU WANT SEX, RIGHT?
HEY! HIDE-TOSHI!
brush
WHAT? THIS IS WHAT I'M LIKE...
slide
!?
ぐっ


Doubting the other person's sincerity reacting indifferently
Disbelieving any confession of love
Because of this provoking behavior, Hidetoshi was punished, receiving only violence in return.
They just wanted to be loved which made it all the sadder
In that moment I understood why
Why Hidetoshi's partners turned abusive.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN KEEP PLAYING AT BEING FRIENDS
CALL IT A PROPOSITION, BUT IF IT'S JUST SEX YOU WANT, I'LL OBLIGE YOU ANY WAY I CAN

—But,
I have no such doubts about Hidetoshi
AFTER ALL HE'LL THINK HE "TEMPTED ME" OR THAT I PITY HIM
"Are you prepared to give up everything for Sawaki-san?"

You were protecting me, weren't you?
In high school... No, maybe even earlier, Hidetoshi had already recognized my attachment
He's not oblivious like me
Thanks to Mio's question, I finally realized why Hidetoshi's been running away from me.
All this was done for my sake.
Pushing me into Shibuya's arms and then using coming out as an excuse to distance himself from me.
To say anything would have destroyed everything.

YOU KNOW,
YOU CAN SAY WHAT YOU LIKE, BUT I'M NOT GIVING UP
grab
!
smack
IF YOU DON'T ACCEPT ME,
THEN I'LL GO TO YOUR MOTHER AND SAY, "PLEASE ENTRUST HIDETOSHI TO ME"

ARE YOU CRAZY!?
YOU CAN'T DO THAT!
YOU KNOW I'LL DO WHAT I SAY I WILL
grab
STOP IT!
YOU MUSTN'T!
I WON'T THEN

IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF MY WILL-FULNESS.
THIS ISN'T YOUR FAULT.
I'LL EVEN KEEP IT FROM OUR PARENTS, BECAUSE I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO BLAME YOU.

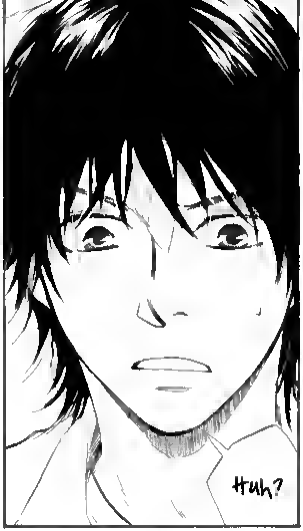
THIS WAY YOU'LL LISTEN TO ME, RIGHT?
BECAUSE YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO OVER-LOOK MY WILL-FULNESS.

It's okay that you're different
I won't forget everything that you've done for me or why you've been trying to run away
Whether I like you or I love you, I can't say
KENGO, THIS WON'T WORK...
YES, IT WILL
I WON'T SAY ANYTHING IF YOU'RE AFRAID
BREAK UP WITH KANAZAWA
AND DON'T SEE ANYONE ELSE ANY-MORE
DON'T LET ANYONE HIT YOU EVER AGAIN

I TOLD YOU ALREADY
I'LL HOLD YOU SO PLEASE BE WITH ME!
KENGO...!
IT'S SIMPLE, I WON'T GO BACK ON WHAT I SAID
CALL US FRIENDS OR CHILDHOOD PLAYMATES, I DON'T CARE
If you're afraid to give this relationship a name then we can just be together like this

Because
I'll leave you
some way to
rationalize it.
kiss
kiss
thump
Huh?
glare
han

Wait...
It's not just the alcohol talking!
tora
LIAR!
THIS EX PRES- SION
IT'S BEEN TEN YEARS SINCE I'VE SEEN IT
I HATE IT WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK! YOU'RE ALWAYS SAYING SUCH IRRESPONSIBLE THINGS
Pat
YOU SAID YOU'D KISS ME ONLY
I'm not lying!
That's why I haven't done more than that!


Huh?

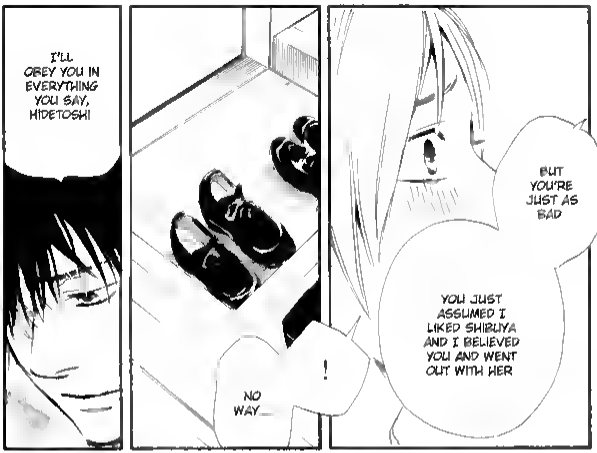
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO HAVE SEX WITH ME!
AREN'T YOU CONTRADICTING YOURSELF...?

Hey! Stop raking up the past! That was...
YOU KNEW HOW I FELT BUT DID AS YOU PLEASED ANYWAY
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU COULD BE LIKE THIS

THOUGH I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE PRETTY OBLIVIOUS, I DIDN'T THINK YOU COULD BE MEAN AS WELL
Mean? How am I mean?

slump
HIDE-TOSHI...
ME. I'M ALWAYS FALLING FOR SOME ROTTEN GUY,
AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
BUT NOBODY'S AS BAD AS YOU ARE,
sniff
sniff
THEY WERE ALL GENTLER THAN YOU...

SORRY
BUT
I DON'T WANT TO GIVE YOU UP TO ANY-BODY ELSE
I DON'T WANT TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE I DID IN HIGH SCHOOL


I'LL OBEY YOU IN EVERYTHING YOU SAY, HIDETOSHI
NO WAY...
!
YOU JUST ASSUMED I LIKED SHIRIUA AND I BELIEVED YOU AND WENT OUT WITH HER
BUT YOU'RE JUST AS BAD

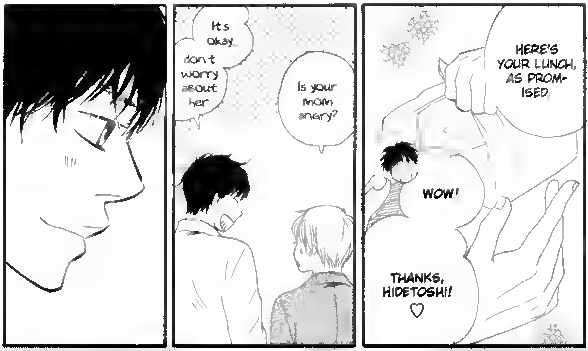
YOU, YOU'RE LYING!
YOU DIDN'T STOP WHEN I ASKED YOU TO LAST TIME!

I WOULD'VE IF YOU'D REALLY MEANT IT
TSK!
BEER BREATH
Slide
I KNOW, I KNOW...

GO WASH OFF THAT SMELL
I'LL HELP YOU BATHE.
HUH…
WOW… HE'S BLUSHING ALL THE WAY TO HIS NECK.
OKAY…

Back then.
KENGO, HURRY UP!
Third year in junior high, games day
MITSUKA
STOMP STOMP
IT'S ALMOST EIGHT!
Mommy
Mommy
STOP NAGGING!
HURRY UP AND EAT YOUR BREAK-FAST
HIDETOSHI-KUN?
WHY'S HE GOING TO SCHOOL WITH KENGO?
Isn't he in high school? I don't get it
HIDETOSHI'S COMING OVER, ISN'T HE?
CRAP!
I gotta eat fast!
Bliss
Ripples/Amend-Fungus

Oh!
clack
farkyle
Ha ha ha
What does that say about my cooking!?
THIS SON OF MINE ACTUALLY ASKED HIDETOSHI-KUN TO PREPARE HIS LUNCH FOR GAMES DAY!
Papa... can you believe it?
HIDETOSHI-KUN'S COOKING IS DELICIOUS NO DOUBT
I'M LEAVING NOW!
Not you too!
HIDETOSHI!
MORNING, KENGO


It's okay.
don't worry about her
Is your mom angry?
HERE'S YOUR LUNCH, AS PROMISED.
WOW!
THANKS, HIDETOSHI!
♡

OH, DID YOU PUT TAMAGO-YAKI IN IT?
YES, YES.
When I was still young and ignorant,
back then...

Bows

Thank you everyone for reading the first volume of Ano Hi no Kimi wo Dakishimeta nara!!

Like the previous work, this manga is based on the story written by Sakiya-sensei. Not only are the characters adults this time, the content of the story is adult too ♡

It's a novel experience. I've only just noticed that I've never depicted an adult romance in my work before~

In the beginning, when we were planning the characters, Sakiya-sensei gave me some suggestions, such as Kengo having "a hairstyle similar to a famous certain person" so I went with that style for him. But it seems to have turned out as a messy head of hair.

Next, Sakiya-sensei even gave me Hidetoshi's weight, when I saw it I yelled, "Impossible!" (laughs), because he's just too thin. Lighter than me even, ahh~ (sob) He's thin and he came out of the closet too, a comrade...

Cough... Well then, if I can meet everyone again in the second volume that would be great!

YAMAMOTO Kotetsuko

あの日のきみを抱きしめたなら 1

END

□初出□
第1話――ルチルvol.18(2007年5月)
第2話――ルチルvol.19(2007年7月)
第3話――ルチルvol.20(2007年9月)
第4話――ルチルvol.21(2007年11月)
第5話――ルチルvol.22(2008年1月)
第6話――ルチルvol.23(2008年3月)
〔あの頃―〕――描き下ろし
あとがき――描き下ろし

バーズコミックス　ルチルコレクション
あの日のきみを抱きしめたなら①

2008年7月24日　第1刷発行

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発行人●伊藤振彦
発行元●株式会社　幻冬舎コミックス
　　〒151-0051　振京都渋谷区千駄ヶ谷4-9-7
　　TEL 03-5411-6432(編集)
発売元●株式会社　幻冬舎
　　〒151-0051　振京都渋谷区千駄ヶ谷4-9-7
　　TEL 03-5411-6222(営振)
　　振替00120-8-767643
印刷・製本所●図書印刷株式会社

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ISBN978-4-344-81372-4　C9979
Printed in Japan

幻冬舎コミックスホームページ　http://www.gentosha-comics.net

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発行 幻冬舎コミックス

9784344813724

ISBN978-4-344-81372-4

1929979005900

C9979 ¥590E

雑誌 54247-85
定価：本体590円+税
発行＝幻冬舎コミックス
発売＝幻冬舎

六歳違いの二歳年上の幼なじみ・沢木秀利はクールだ。
秀利の高校卒業式の日、告白しようとした秀利を
無自覚のうちに振ってから十年。彼氏はいないと言っている。
泊めてくれるなら誰でもいい——
そう言い放つ秀利に智哉は
!?